And now I hear them pass my silent doors—
The merry carolers—by twos and fours,
linging the same sweet song, which swells and
soars
Ontil their notes with other singers blend,
While heavenward the chorus doth ascend:
"And every knee before Thy throne shall bend,"
Yet, hear the bells, how heartily they ring!
How joyously and happily they sing
The Christ is born—Hall! hall! your King!

TROTH.

Blear ring the bells of fearless Truth,
As if their tongues would call, forsooth,
"I am the Way, the Truth, the Life!"
What! think you in your worldly strife
That Policy can make a way
Where Principle's effulgent ray
Baould shed abroad its flashing light,
For cease to guide the pilgrim right;

The brazen bells, deep-toned and loud Through foggy mist and stormy cloud, Call for the steward to report; To stand before his Judge in court— To there give in the Lord's amount And certify to his account; But, should he trembling, fainting, fall, Blind Justice drops him from her scale.

Thank God! the bells of Mercy ring, Oh sinner beld, to thee we bring Salvation free, for Christ is born— This is His glorious birthday morn! He's knocking at your door to day; He leves you still—turn not away. Ring out! ye bells of Mercy, ring! Immanuel, Savior, Lord and King!

The bells of Faith strike clear and strong; There's not a note about them wrong; "The evidence of things unseen" Leads pilgrims on to pastures green— A road o'er which our fathers trod. And proved, by works, their faith in God. Now all with thankful hearts may sing: "Simply to Thy cross I cling."

The bells of Hope, with anchor's crest, Are by each doubting sinner blest.
Their cheering tones, to many ears, Allay the pain of puzzling fears;
But, as each bell in turn is rung, It swings around to where are hung The bells of Faith, and it is there Your trusting mother kneels in prayer.

The silver bells of Charity.
Oh, bells of greatest carity!
Of sisters three thou art the chief. To Pain and Sorrow, Death and Grief A welcome friend: thy voice is sweet, And cheers on homeward criting feet, While angels cry, with one accord. "Well done, thou faithful of the Lord!"

THE BELLS TOGETHER. Go in, go in, go in;
Go, search thy heart to-day,
And, in thy closet dim,
Fray to the Babe that lay
In the manger—from the skies-God's atoning sacrifice.

Go out, go out, go out;
Go, find the poor to-day;
With light hearts search about.
Tell of the Babe that lay
In the manger—from the skies—
Faith and Love He glorifies.

Ge up, go up;
Go to the church to-day—
For you He drained the cup;
For you a babe He lay
In the manger—from the skies—
Trusting hearts He purifies.

Go down, go down; Go, seek the vile to-day; Find the pris'ners of the town; Tell of the Babe that lay In the manger—from the skies— Sinful souls He purifies.

Whate'er you are, whate'er you do, God's Christmas chimes ring out for you.

## DAVID OAKTREE:

## Hetty's Christmas Present.

BY W. H. WHITE.

Oaktree farm is situated in the immediate vicinity of Oldtown, a picturesque little port of entry in Ocean coun-The owner and occupant in 187was Elias Oaktree, the son of Enoch. the son of Abijah, who was the son of Ohed, and so on into the dimness of the Oaktree past. The Oaktrees, it will be seen, were deeply rooted in the soil. The founder of the family, old Adam Oaktree, left the mother country in the evening of his days, to settle amid the Eden-like pastures of Ocean county, so long ago that the record of the event has been almost effaced by the dust of centuries.

From that remete period, each successor to the estate has been content to tion. follow in the beaten tracks of his ancestors, mostly cattle-paths, for the Oaktrees were great graziers, besides being famous producers of cheese and butter; while as milk-dealers they have ever been considered the very cream of their

It is something singular that but one Oaktree had ever been born in a generation; a younger son was unknown to the race, while no daughter had ever made an appearance.

The son of the owner, at the time of the opening of our story, was David Oaktree, who had arrived at the mature age of 25 years. Daniel stood about five feet nine in his worsted stockings; he was broad-shouldered, deep-chested, compactly built, muscular; a very Hercules in strength. His hair was brown, his eyes hazel, his features regular, with a complexion healthfully sun-burned.

A neighbor of the Oaktrees was Darjus Seaton, who lived in a rambling old homestead with his wife, Buth; and his daughter, Mehitable. The latter was a graceful little rustic, of twenty years, look to your safety."
violet-eyed, and with hair of a deep auburn hue. Without question, Miss Mehitable was the prettiest girl in Old- the side of Hetty, who lay pale as township. She was of happy nature; her laugh was melody, her smile a ray beaming upon her red-ripe lips, gleaming in her violet-blue eyes, peeping out of dimples, to ripple in merry waves over cheeks and chin.

"Hetty" (as all but the most staid of her old-time relatives and friends called her) and David were lovers, engaged in in a state of semi-stupor. due form. They were to be united matrimonially, on "one of these days," but which one had not yet been definite-

ly settled upon. hood, a well-to-do member of another deep-rooted family in Ocean county.

first person he met after leaving the station was an old acquaintance, Elnathan Fern, who had an important story to tell, namely, that Hetty Seaton was about to be married to Beriah Thorn-Beriah himself had so told Elnathan.

But the story was false. Hetty had written to David, in answer to his loving letters, and had given the missives farm affairs, intrusted them, for mail- to be an act of felo de se. ing, to Thorn, and what disposition the

mystery to this day. jealous nature, he accepted the lie as a laughing Hetty of former days. tale of truth. The immediate consequence was that our hero, for the first said. Mad with disappointment, jealousy and apple-jack, Oaktree dashed off in search of Miss Mehitable Seaton. swer, Mr. Beriah Thorn retired sullenly to his cows and his cabbages, to chew the cud of revengefully bitter fancies.

An hour after, David Oaktree returned to Seaton's house, with Hetty in a terrible wound in the head. He laid the poor girl upon a sofa, and, merely assiduously sought their consolation. saying, "I am going for the doctor," A few months after her recover

rushed from the house. his face horribly mangled.

tried to do murder." What! did David Oaktree cut this awful gash on my daughter's head?" shricked the exasperated woman.

"Yes; and then nearly murdered me for interfering. And here is the weapon he used," exhibiting an old spade han- our attention to other affairs. dle, stained with blood, and having a clinging to it.

Hetty began to revive. She opened head?"

"Don't mention his name again, the murdering wretch!" cried the indig-nant mother. "Here's the very club he tried to kill you with. I should think you'd had enough of him."

"Tried to kill me! It is impossible, resident. don't remember anything about it. Did David strike me?

"Yes, Hetty," gasped Beriah, from an a joyous welcome old arm-chair in which he had thrown Patience his wife. himself. "Your mother is right. David

come. I am sick. I-I-" Before he could finish, Beriah slid from the chair in a dead faint.

upon her head had "shocked her system through and through," as her mother pertinently remarked, and had caused had been hurt.

David returned with Dr. Solon, Hetty, that Beriah's story was true. The elder Seaton hotly accused Oaktree of the bloody deed, repeating Thorn's charges again and again, and exhibiting the pleaded "Not guilty." blood-stained spade-handle in proof of the accusation!

Hetty was silent. "Do you believe it, Hetty?" asked

The suffering girl, among whose exu-Mrs. Seaton's scissors and a saturated the court.' sponge, closed her eyes and made no

Cut to the heart, David exclaimed. piteously, "Oh, Hetty, Hetty, say you don't believe it!"

She opened her eyes and said, faintly, "I can't recollect how I was hurt. But, Atorney. David, you did act and talk strangely. Your words were cruel, cruel! And you nearly killed Beriah, too." Doctor Solon now interfered. "There

Seaton must not be excited," he said. "Do you believe me guilty, doctor?"

water and wash Thorn's face. He has received an ugly wound. His nose is demolished. Oaktree, you have done some bloody work this evening. You had better leave Oldtown in haste, and

David was crushed in spirit, seeing that all were against him. He knelt by marble, and again unconscious. "God knows," he said, "I never harmed this of sunshine. It was delightful—esdear angel. I did strike Beriah Thorn, pecially to David—to see that smile and if I had killed him I should not be sorry. He deserves to die, curse him!"

was arrested on the beach near Oldtown,

gated by Justice Bright. Thorn, whose evidence was given as he lay in bed, testified strongly against his rival. The There was another ardent admirer of result was that David Oaktree was held and his words were literally spoken

His name was Beriah Thorn. He was strong as a young giant. His thick, coarse hair was of the hue of a crow's feathers. His eyes were deeply set and thick and although and although and although a property of the property of coal black, and, although his complexion was as tawny as a half-breed Indian's, yet a handsomer face was not borne by any man in the county.

Oaktree, who was accordingly locked up in the county jail and held for trial. The Court of Oyer and Terminer was to meet in Oldtown the next week, and near me. I thought he had murdered asked Hetty.

One bright crisp afternoon in December—it was the day before Christmas, David returned to Oaktree by him frequently, but brought with them mas, David returned to Oaktree by him frequently, but brought with them rail from New York, after a stay of two no comfort, for they really believed him weeks in the great metropolis, whither to be guilty. They thought, it is true, he had been sent by his father on business connected with the farm. The liquor; but that was rather an aggravation than an excuse in the eyes of the moral community of Oldtown and vi-

On the morning of the day of trial it was found that David had escaped from prison. Search was diligently made, but without success. Two weeks sub-sequently the body of a drowned man was found upon the beach; and this body was identified as that of David to her father; but he, being busy with Oaktree; and the drowning was thought

After a long illness, Hetty Seaton relatter made of the tender things is a covered. But, though restored to bodily health, mentally she was far from well. David listened to Elnathan, and, as The cloud over her memory remained the story was repeated by others, and as dark as ever; her cheerful spirits as the promised letters had not reached him, and being withal of a somewhat with little resemblance to the merry,

Time sped. Beriah Thorn, whose good looks were forever gone, offered time in his life, fuddled his brain with himself matrimonially to Miss Seaton. the then popular Ocean county beverage His offer was backed by the parental called "apple-jack." Under the excitement produced by this potent tipple, David sallied forth about an hour almost fiercely. His lands, his backers, before sundown, to see Hetty and give his money, the risk he had incurred in her a "piece of his mind." She was her defense—according to his oft-renot at home, but had gone to call on peated story-were unavailing. Taking Miss Lamb, a neighbor, so Mrs. Seaton Hetty's emphatic "No!" as a final an-

David Oaktree's father and mother mourned the loss of their son deeply, his arms, insensible, and bleeding from finding no comfort save in hard work, and it must be admitted that they

A few months after her recovery, Hetty Seaton visited New York, for He had been gone a short time when the first time in her life. A cousin of Beriah Thorn came staggering in, with the Seatons, Mrs. Verdan, a wealthy, childless widow, had, when Hetty was "What is the meaning of all this, on the younger side of her teens, ment the Beriah Thorn!" exclaimed Mrs. Seaton. offered to adopt the pretty little rustic. Thorn. "It means that David Oaktree has The proposal which was then refused

was now renewed, and gladly accepted. In her new home, surrounded by all the softening influences which wealth, controlled by education and adorned with refinement, ever exerts we will leave Hetty for the present, and turn

Seven years after in the month of quantity of long auburn-hued hair November—the ship "Invincible," from Cadiz bound to New York, was wrecked on the coast a few miles from Oldtown. her eyes and exclaimed, "David! where is David? What is the matter with my The ship soon became a complete wreck, from which nothing not worn upon the persons of the rescued was saved.

One of the passengers, an American, soon discovered that the shore upon which he had been cast formed a part of Ocean county, of which he was once a

The quondam citizen repaired without delay to Oaktree, where he received a joyous welcome from old Elias and

The news was quickly bruited abroad Oaktree tried to kill you, and nearly that David Oaktree had returned, alive murdered me. I wish the doctor would and well. The greatest excitement that behind Mr. Oaktree and struck at him from the various points of vantage. had prevailed in Oldtown since the with all his force. But I shrieked out an An organ occupied the proper place in famous inquest was the immediate result. The ultimate consequences were alarm, and he avoided the blow. Thorn the named blow after blow in rapid suctions and in the center of the transport of the content of the conte Hetty was bewildered. The blow more serious. Beriah Thorn still lived and cherished his old animosity against our hero. Time, which usually lays a healing hand on such social sores, had such a confusion of memory that she intensified the bitterness of Beriah. could not recall the slightest particular Actuated by this feeling, he caused a concerning the manner in which she warrant to be issued for David's arrest, upon the old charge, and when the sun Her father, as well as Mrs. Seaton, first set upon him after his return the sided with Thorn, and, by the time wanderer was viewing the resplendent scene from the west window of the in spite of herself, was made to believe strongest cell in the county jail. Four weeks subsequent to his arrest, our hero was arraigned before the Court of Oyer and Terminer for Ocean county. He

The trial proceeded. 'The District Attorney stated the points he intended to prove.

"It is one of the clearest cases I was David, excitedly, when Mrs. Seaton's ever connected with," he said. "There is tongue had ceased, from sheer exhausdence against the accused. Mr. Oaktree, you had better confess your guilt, berant curls the doctor was busy with and throw yourself upon the mercy of

> "Even to please such a Daniel in the law as you seem to be, I shall not alter my plea, I am not guilty, sir!" was fore his escape from the county iail.

David's bitter reply.
"I can make it clear to the court that you are!" snarled Mr. Fox, the District

Mr. and Mrs. Seaton were examined. Their evidence explained the relations between David Caktree and Mehitable Seaton, and the rivalry of Thorn and has been too much talking done. Miss the accused. This was to show that there was a motive for the assault. Others testified to the intense excite; "Well, I can't say; don't know. But the evidence is all against you. Mrs. Seaton, get another basin of milk-warm incite to land on the eventful day. This was done to make it appear that a condition of mind existed that would the jury found as directed, and David

Beriah Thorn was sworn "You saw the assault, Mr. Thorn?" queried the District Attorney. "Yes, sir, all of it," was the prompt

Who were present beside yourself? "Miss Seaton and David Oaktree." "Where did the assault take place?" "On the Old South road, near Pas-

tor's meadow." "State the circumstances." "Miss Seaton and myself were walking along the road. Oaktree met us, and, without a word being said, struck Then, kissing Hetty tenderly and me a violent blow, with an old spade shaking his fist at Thorn, Oaktree left handle, and then felled Miss Seaton to the house. The next morning David the earth with the same weapon. Then thank you with all my heart. You have was arrested on the beach near Oldtown, where he had been wandering all night, in a state of semi-stupor. he attempted to strike the young lady as she lay on the ground; but I interposed and the blows intended for her A few days after the case was investi- fell upon my head and face. You can see that I carry the marks to this day." He did carry them, there being very little left of his onee-handsome nose,

> "through the mouth of a wound "Did the accused speak during the "He said: 'I'll kill you both. You shall never live to marry each other!"

this statement. "Is that all, Mr. Thorn?"

Miss Scaton and taken the body away to hide it. Then I made my way to

Seaton's house." Dr. Solon's evidence was in regard to the condition of Hetty and Beriah on the occasion. He also, in cross-examination, related a conversation between the accused and himself, in which the former had stated that Thorn was the would-be assassin. But this was objected to, and ruled out. The crossquestionings of Thorn and the others evoked nothing in favor of the pris-

Miss Mehitable Seaton was called by the prosecution. David's cheeks from her nur flushed, his eyes dilated at the mention quaintances. of that name. His love for Hetty was still deep and fervent.

From the farther end of the room lady was ushered to the witness-stand. She was plainly but fashionably dressed; and she bore herself with an air of quiet elegance which caused Oaktree to stare astonished, remembering, as he did, the unpolished rustic of former days. She threw back her veil, and displayed a face which evinced education and refinement in every feature. It was David's old sweetheart, but polished and improved almost beyond his recognition.

Oaktree's appearance at that moment was not prepossessing. He had been too sorely distressed in mind to care about his personal appearance, and his poor father, at the last moment, had brought him by mistake an old blue suit-which now hung about the wearer a world too wide at all points-instead of the new clothes ordered at Draper's, the Oldtown tailor. David was thin and haggard, beside. The contrast between him and Hetty was marked indeed; she with her air of elegance, he seemingly as clumsy as the dullest plow-boy that ever followed a furrow.

"Now, Miss Seaton, please inform us of all you know concerning this brutal business," said the District Attorney. Hetty told her story up to the mo-

ment that Oaktree had met her and "That's all, Miss Seaton," said

Mr. Fox, the District Attorney, supposing that her memory, in regard to the assault, was as imperfect as ever. "The case for the prosecution is closed, if the opposite counsel has no questions to ask.

"But, if you please, it is not all. The most important facts, which I now distinctly remember, are yet to be related," replied Hetty to the astonished attorney.

Mr. Shields, the counsel for the defense, himself much amazed, jumped to his feet briskly.

"As you have done with the witness, Mr. Fox, and as the prosecution has nothing more to prove, I will go on with the defense," he said. "Please continue, Miss Seaton."

"Mr. Oaktree," she said, "asked meexcitedly, to go back with him, and ap, plied some uncomplimentary epithets to Beriah Thorn, when the latter suddenly seized the spade handle, which stood against the fence, stepped silently last the weapon descended with a force that would have made the stroke fatal had it reached its object. But, impelled by an uncontrollable impulse, I rushed between the two men, and gave Thorn a push which caused his weapon to miss its mark. At this he, Mr. Thorn—" she paused, and repeated the name-"Mr. Thorn turned upon me, and exclaimed, furiously: 'Since you are so fond of Dave Oaktree, you may as well die for him!' or words to that effect; and struck me here," exposing a long cicatrice the wound had left. "Had not David partially parried the blow I should have been killed. I have a dim recollection that David snatched the spade handle from Thorn and struck at him. Then I

fainted." Mr. Fox could not shake Hetty's testimony although he cross-questioned her at all points, with all the ingenuity

acquired by years of experience.

After she had finished, Oaktree's council produced a document which was admitted as evidence. It was a statement of the affair written by David be-The paper had been preserved as a curiosity, in the County Clerk's office; it fully-for his sake. was found to agree with Miss Scaton's testimony in every particular. The District Attorney was disgusted and would not make an argument. The defendant's counsel submitted the case of his client without a word. The Judge summed up

thus briefly. "The prosecution has signally failed. The witness Thorn has clearly perjured

Beriah Thorn betook himself hastily from the court, retired to the recesses of dow. his farm, and was permitted to remain there unmolested.

David and Hetty—the latter accompa-nied by her cousin, Mrs. Verdan—met in gazed earnestly at each other. Old-time memories crowded thickly upon each.
Admiration mingled with David's love; disappointment at his apparent unculture blended with Hetty's feelings.

Oaktree offered his hand; she laid her delicate fingers upon his broad palm. "Thanks, Miss Seaton," he said. saved my life, Hetty; for if they had sworn me off to State prison I shouldn't

have lived to come out of it." "And forgive me for the cruel wrong dollar." I have done you," she replied, looking wistfully into his eyes.

What Miss Seaton saw in their hazel depths drew her to him irresistibly and melted the conventional crust she had acquired. She became once more, for the moment at least, his dear little

"Oh, David, David!" she cried, and clasped him about the neck with old-A profound sensation was caused by time fervency.

He kissed her passionately; then, seeing Mrs. Verdan's look of surprise, blushed like a girl.

"When shall I see you again?" he

" On Monday evening, Christmas eve, at Mrs. Verdan's, in New York," giving him the street and number, and presenting him formally to that lady. Mrs. Verdan exchanged but a few sentences with our hero, yet when they separated it was with a much more favorable opinion of him than she had at first enter-

MORECAGE SAME CAM Martheoner.

tained. David soon learned that Mrs. Verdan intended to leave her property to Miss Mehitable Seaton, who had thus acquired a degree of respect and admiration which naught but money or prospective wealth could have evolved from her numerous Ocean county ac-

At an early hour on Christmas eve, David Oaktree opened the gate leading to the grounds surrounding the Verdan

veranda; the next moment David was in her presence. Could this be the man who so recently stood before her in the Oldtown

Hetty heard his footsteps upon the

court-room, pale, haggard, awkward? And yet it was he; but how different! His ill-fitting garments changed for fashionable habiliments, his unkempt hair and beard neatly arranged, his cheeks flushed with the hue of health-

the metamorphosis was complete! The evening passed pleasantly. Het-ty found that David, like herself, had vastly improved, in mind as well as manners. During his long absence he had, besides devoting himself to the study of books on all possible occasions, picked up a vast amount of general information in various parts of the world, and David had been an indefatigable traveler since his hasty exit from the

Ocean county lock-up.
On this occasion he said nothing concerning his financial affairs, and Hetty's impression was that he still remained poor, or comparatively poor, with a prospect, in the distant future, of becoming his father's successor, and the owner of Oaktree farm.

Mrs. Verdan, charmed with our hero's conduct and conversation, cordially invited him to the annual holiday festival which was to be celebrated at her house on the morrow-Christmas. David cheerfully accepted the invitation.

On the afternoon of the following day, David, arrayed in faultless evening costume, was warmly welcomed by Hetty and Mrs. Verdan.

The guests being all assembled, the doors of the great conservatory were thrown open, and a scene of novel beauty was presented. In this immense conservatory, which was lofty enough to contain full-grown palms, the trunks and branches of spruce, hemlock and pine trees had been skillfully arranged in imitation of the cruciform interior of a medieval cathedral. Every treetrunk in this Christmas temple was a verdure-clad Gothic column; each branch was a portion, clothed in living green, of the interlacing mullions, aisles, arches, nave, roof and transept tracery.

The fragrant box-plant hung in festoons from pillar to column; rare flowers, fashioned into crosses, stars, letters and Christmas phrases, hung cession at David, which were parried. At trees, was the chancel with its evergreen altar. In short, all the appointments of a cathedral were here represented.

A reverend gentleman in canonicals was at the altar, by whom, with organ and choral accompaniments, the Christmas services were impressively celebrated.

The last notes of the final anthem were still vibrating in the perfumed air, when David whispered to Hetty, "Will you grant me a favor—a Christmas gift that I may choose for myself?"

"With all my heart. What is it?" "Yourself, Hetty!"

His meaning suddenly flashed upon her. She blushed vividly, and hesitated. "What, to-day? Now? Impossible! Ask Cousin Verdan." Mrs. Verdan made no objection. In-

deed, she was pleased with the proposal Hetty insisted upon time in which to make a more suitable toilet. A few hours after she reappeared in a costume which seemed perfect at all points—especially to the gentlemen present-but which under other circumstances she would have scorned. But she made this sacrifice of etiquette to love grace-

David and Hetty were ushered to the altar; and the mildly-amazed clergyman proceeded to bind them together, matrimonially, in due and ancient form. Hetty and Mrs. Verdan still looked

upon our hero as a poor man. The fete went on with unusual brilliancy.

In the evening, David and his wife were together in the transept of the Christmas temple. From the hundred branches of a great chandelier, the light, filtering through colored globes, was like the softened sunshine which is shed from the tinted panes of a chancel win-

"Hetty," said David, as they stood enveloped in this variegated effulgence, "when we were first before this blessed altar, I said: 'With all my worldly goods the ante-chamber of the court. They I thee endow.' I now fulfill that prom-

He gave her a package.
"What is this?" she said.

"A Christmas present; all my worldly She opened the packet. It contained \$101,000 worth of bonds, coupons intact!

"Pretty ornaments for a Christmas tree. Hetty. Why, David, I thought you were-"Poor? With your love, darling, I were rich, indeed, did I not possess a

"Dear David, my David!" she murmured, nestling against his shoulder. "How pleased Cousin Verdan will be!" "With these adornments for the Christmas tree?"

"Yes. But I would have been content if-" "What, Hetty?" "If there had not been a single leaf of this kind upon my glorious Oaktree,"

William Augustus to sleepy room-mate—"Come, John Henry, why don' you get up with the lark, as I do?" John Henry, grimly—"Been up with him all night."

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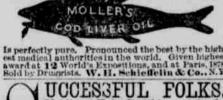
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